

KANSAS.

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RESOLUTIONS

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN RELATION TO

*The Territory of Kansas.*

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JUNE 14, 1856.—Ordered to be printed.

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX.

RESOLVES in relation to the Territory of Kansas.

Whereas the Congress of the United States has enacted a law, establishing a government in the Territory of Kansas, which opens the said Territory to the introduction of slavery ;

And whereas armed mobs have invaded the Territory of Kansas, interfering with the political rights and franchises of the settlers ;

And whereas the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has asked in vain, through its legislature, the State government of Missouri, and the President of the United States, to protect the settlers of the Territory of Kansas against the unparalleled outrages to which they have been subjected—which outrages have been heaped upon them by the slave interest in this country, for the purpose of forcing slavery upon Kansas, against the will of its inhabitants, and against the wishes of a majority of the people of the Union ;

And whereas, through the neglect of the government of the United States to protect the settlers, and redress their wrongs, they have been left, as a last resource, to fall back upon the original right of self-preservation, and have appealed to the American people for justification and assistance ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we have heard the call for sympathy and aid which has come up to the people of the United States from the settlers of Kansas, with the deepest solicitude ; that their sufferings have touched our hearts, and the manly defence of their rights has won our admiration ; and while we do not claim that, as a State legislature, we are

clothed with power to initiate measures for their relief, we nevertheless present their case to the people of this Commonwealth, in full confidence that they will use all just and constitutional means to aid these heroic men in maintaining and defending their liberties.

*Resolved*, That the inhabitants of Kansas are justifiable in declining to recognise the code of laws which was forced upon the Territory by the act of a body of men calling themselves a legislature, and yet composed, in part, of persons who were not settlers; and that the President of the United States, in endorsing those enactments as the true laws of Kansas, and in his threat that the settlers shall be made to obey them, even at the point of the bayonet, has exhibited a servility to a sectional slave interest, and an indifference to the fundamental principles of justice and freedom, which merit the condemnation of the American people.

*Resolved*, That this is a fit occasion to re-assert the principles so often declared to be the doctrine of Massachusetts; that Congress has power to prohibit slavery in the Territories of the United States, and that this power should be exercised to its full extent.

*Resolved*, That as the intrigues to thrust slavery upon Kansas have been growing more desperate ever since the repeal of the Missouri prohibition, until the question of free or slave Territory is become a prominent and vital issue before the country, and threatens to drive the nation into a civil war, we hold that the speedy admission of Kansas into the Union as a free State, with her present constitution, is a measure of first importance to the welfare of that Territory, and to the tranquillity and honor of the United States, and that our senators and representatives in Congress are earnestly requested to use every exertion to bring about this result.

*Resolved*, That his excellency the governor be requested to transmit a copy of these resolves to the President of the United States, to the governors of each of the States and Territories, and to each of our senators and representatives in Congress.

House of Representatives, May 30, 1856.—Passed.

CHARLES A. PHELPS, *Speaker*.

In Senate, May 31, 1856.—Passed.

ELIHU C. BAKER, *President*.

Approved June 3, 1856.

HENRY J. GARDNER.

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
Boston, June 4, 1856.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original resolves.

Attest:

FRANCIS DE WITT,  
*Secretary of the Commonwealth.*